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## Concerned ESL students address school board

**Stephanie Dumm, News Messenger Reporter**

Ten community members requested to speak at Tuesday's school board meeting to protect the adult English as a Second Language (ESL) class offered at Phoenix High School.

ESL classes are offered at the school as part of the adult-education program offered by the Western Placer Unified School District.

While not all 10 spoke Tuesday, their message was clear: don't cancel the ESL programs.

"We came tonight because we will like to continue with more classes, to learn English and go to college," said student Omar Rodriguez. "We feel sad because our teacher said our schooling may be closed forever. Hopefully that will not happen. We want to be part of this country and try to do the best."

Marcos Pasquale also spoke, saying he also did not want the ESL class to be canceled "because we want better lives and I want to get my diploma."

School board President Paul Carras told the audience that while the "budget committee comes up with ideas for cuts" such as canceling the ESL classes, "we're not interested in doing away with the adult ESL program."

Mary Boyle, assistant superintendent of educational services, also addressed the audience, saying, "the classes are well needed and I would like to commend the two men that spoke."

"I'm concerned there has been misinformation that the district is doing away with adult education," Boyle said. "We do not have any intention of going down that road."

All 10 community members who had filled out comment cards did not address the school board since they were there for the same reason.

### Summer school offerings reduced

Summer school classes will be reduced this summer because of reduced funding, according to Boyle.

The Western Placer Unified School District school board voted to reduce the summer school program during Tuesday's meeting.

Funding for summer school has been reduced to the 2007-2008 rates, Boyle said, and "funding for pupils at risk of retention" have been cut by 19.84 percent.

"We will reduce summer school to areas that are critical," Boyle said.

Summer school will still be offered for students on Individual Education Programs, according to Boyle, and also for Extended Year Service.

Boyle said the Extended Year Service is offered to juniors and seniors who are credit deficient.

"These services will meet legal requirements and will support students who are near graduation," Boyle said. "This will also allow sites to more utilize the limited funding to support after-school tutorial programs during the school year."

In the board packet, Boyle stated, "we are offering a menu of intervention and support programs throughout the year (at school) sites to support students to avoid retention recommendations, (and) teachers are regularly communicating with parents as well."

Retention means having to repeat a school year.